

Subject of Appeal:	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	Case:	R5
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Event	Mini-Spingold II	Event DIC	Terry Lavender
Date	08/12/2015	Session	Second Session, Quarterfinals

Auction

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	1NT ¹	Dbl ²
Pass	Pass	2♣	Dbl
2♦	Dbl ³	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Both Minors
2: Support Double, no Alert
3: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board	5	N	680 MPS
Dealer	N	♠ A10864	
		♥ Q54	
		♦ QJ63	
Vul	N/S	♣ 2	
W	200 MPS		E 260 MPS
♠ K53			♠ J9
♥ 10986			♥ 2
♦ K97			♦ A10842
♣ 974			♣ KQ863
		S	1130 MPS
		♠ Q72	
		♥ AKJ73	
		♦ 5	
		♣ AJ105	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♠ by N	Made 4	N/S +620	♣ K

Facts Determined at the Table

The director was summoned at the end of the auction. South thought their double showed three spades, a convention that would have been alerted had North recognized it. Further, there was an agreed hesitation before North doubled 2♦. Both of these were sources of unauthorized information to South. The lack of an Alert of the double suggested that North did not recognize it as showing three spades. The out-of-tempo double of 2♦ suggested doubt about whether defending 2♦X was correct.

Director Ruling

As South was in possession of UI that demonstrably suggested 2♠ might be more successful than passing, and since Pass was deemed to be a logical alternative to bidding 2♠, the contract and result were adjusted to 2♦X by West, making two, E/W +180, per Laws 16B1, 12C1e, and 73C.

Director's Ruling	2♦X by W, Made 2, E/W +180
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The Appeal

The North/South players appealed the director's ruling. All four players attended the hearing and agreed to the facts. When N/S were asked what staff had gotten wrong in the ruling, South asserted that they would never have passed 2♦X. South was reminded that the Law restricted their options after they were in possession of UI, but South offered no other argument. South was asked specifically why they bid 2♠ to play in a potential 4-3 fit, since their partner would likely have competed in spades if their partnership had an eight-card spade fit. Their only comment was that they would never pass. E/W did not contribute substantially to the hearing as they indicated they believed the ruling to be correct.

Panel Findings

The panel concluded that the director's ruling was correct, with the caveat that there was no evidence of polling by the director. As such, they instructed the screener to conduct a poll to ascertain what this player's peers would do in this situation.

The screener found five players with between 200 and 800 masterpoints. They were given the hand as a bidding problem. All five opened 1♥. All five either chose a support double as their initial action or were familiar enough with support doubles that they chose it when they learned it to be a method used by this partnership. Two of the five bid 2♠, one bid 2♥, and two passed 2♦X. Passing was therefore deemed to be a logical alternative, and the director's ruling was upheld.

While the appeal did not have much merit, no Appeal without Merit Warning was issued as the director did not do any polling. Had those facts been presented, the appellants might well have understood the ruling and not chosen to appeal.

Panel Decision	2♦X by W, Made 2, E/W +180
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Matt Koltnow
Member	Bernie Gorkin
Member	Mike Roberts